

KOSOVO CUSTOMS

Greetings:

Typical Albanian greetings are *Mirëmengjes* (Good morning), *Mirëdita* (Good afternoon), and *Mirëmbërëma* (Good evening). Another common greeting is *Tung* (Hi). Young people greet each other with *Cka po bë?* (What's up?) and may respond *Sen hic* (Nothing).

Older people greet each other with *Tungjatjeta* (Long life to you) or *Tungat* (an abbreviation of *Tungjatjeta*), followed by *Si jeni?* (How are you?).

In formal situations, Kosovars use the titles *Zoteri* (Mister), *Zonje* (Madam), or *Zonjushë* (Miss).

Younger people address older people with terms of respect such as *Axhe* or *Bac* (which mean “Uncle”) and *Tete* or *Inxhe* (which mean “Aunt”).

Typical Serbian greetings include *Zdravo* (Hello) and *Dobar dan* (Good day).

Gestures:

Kosovars use many gestures common to Europeans, such as winking when sharing a joke, tapping the temple with the index finger to indicate something or someone is crazy, and putting the index finger to the tip of the nose to say “Do not talk.”

Placing the left hand over the chest and moving the head slightly shows appreciation.

Facial expressions and hand motions are not particularly important to conversation, but maintaining eye contact shows that a person is interested in the discussion.

In a formal setting, it is not appropriate to eat or chew gum.

Traditionally, in a social gathering it has been considered rude for an unmarried woman to cross her legs either at the knee or with an ankle on the knee.

Holidays:

Public holidays in Kosovo include New Year's Day (1 Jan.), Independence Day (17 Feb.), Easter (Sunday and Monday), *Dita Punës* (Workers' Day, 1 May), Constitution Day (15 June), *Bajrami Madhë* (the feast at the end of *Ramadan*, the holy month of fasting), *Bajrami Vogël* (the Feast of the Sacrifice, celebrated approximately 70 days after *Bajrami Madhë*), and Christmas (25 December for Catholics; 7 January for Orthodox Christians). Major holidays such as *Bajrami Madhë* and *Bajrami Vogël* are celebrated by gathering with family members and eating large meals with foods such as beef, chicken, stuffed cabbage, and baklava.

Serbs celebrate *Vidovdan* (28 June), which is both a religious holiday and a commemoration of the Battle of Kosovo.